Senator Charles Mathias
Senate Office Bldg.
Washington, D.C.

6/25/76

Dear Mac,

This is unsolicited advice I hope will reach you. I take the time despite now having much less of it because you are the kind of legislator whose tribe, alas, does not really increase, and I would like to prepare you not to be hurt where I can see hurt possible, especially in Maryland where there is now a large cadre of well-informed and serious minded students.

Please take this as seriously as I do. It now is not easy for me to take time for letters that serve no purpose for my work. I had a very heavy phlebitis last October, or at least it was finally detected and I was hospitalized then. Before I was hospitalized I had lost the main vein in the left leg and thigh, h ad somewhat less permanent venous damage to the right leg and had lost all but one artery in both feet at least. To be able to write at all I've had to design a special typewriter table and a mean of keeping my legs horizontal while I type.

When I take time under these circumstances and ask nothing for myself you may, of course, question my judgement but I don't think my intent.

I believe it is likely that the first time you appear before a young audience you will be asked about your Intelligence subcommittee's so-called report on the JFK assassination. Please respond by saying something like you were not on that subcommittee and have not, from your many other duties, had time to read it.

I don't think you really have to read more than the ppening paragraph to get the drift of what I'm telling you. It begin with the declaration it would be generous to describe as no worse than of total irrelevancy. With the limitation imposed by that paragraph nothing that can follow can be relevant. What does follow actually is terrible.

I don't think you will want to take time for full detail but I will undertake to encapsulate what I have read, less than half before it became too much for me and I had to lay it aside.

That subcommittee actually swallowed CIA propaganda I have in my files and takes it seriously. Of course all of it isn't only propaganda but the essence is. These supposed investigators failed to detect one of the most Byzantine ploys of which I know and you have some idea of my experiences. That it did not comprehend and then expose will be a permanent self-defamation. I may not be able to expose it myself but the analysis exists already in my files and they will be a university archive.

The factual error is extensive. It ranges from the minor to the basic. One part of a supposed case is built on a fake fabricated by a Commission lawyer.

This report really is so bad, so unfair, so without base of perspective it has already forced me to become the defender of both the FBI and the CIA, and on the JFK assassination. With my experiences with both agencies and the amount of personal investigation of both I've done and with the anti-democratic abuses of both over so long a period of time this report is, in fact, grossly unfair to both.

Reading it is anguish for me but I will, now in shorter doses, take it all in. I am annotating it as I read. I do not think you will want detail but I'll have them.

Do I have to tell you my dismay when I have lived a ruinous personal life for a dozen years to establish truth and offered everything I have, without limitation and without even credit for the work, just so the Senate could do its assigned job better?

Can you begin to understand how many more fine young people will have their faith in our institutions further diminished, how many will find in this reason to have no faith at all, especially after Watergat e and the fairly widespread and entirely justified that it is far from exposed and largely unpunished?

It has never been easy for me to encourage college audiences to try to make these institutions work. The one way I have been able to do this is by precept, by reporting honestly that while they kick and scream we can make them function, to a degree.

This came to mind when Rollie Atkinson phoned me last night, when I had just begun to read a press copy of the report and was in partial shock.

It is the dismal undertone of all my work that in time of great crisis our institutions have failed society. I could not avoid telling him, whether or not it is in today's paper, that this report means the Senate failed deliberately- that it not only did not function, it refused to and became part of what in my titles are whitewash and coverup.

Sophisticated people realize the reality, that the practise of politics is the art of compromise. But there must be some principles, some issues where the national interest demands full truth. When the sanctity of our most basic institutions is in issue compromise becomes complicity. I do hold this view. You may find it simplistic. But I do hope for your own sake you will find it possible to detach yourself from this newest official monstrosity that in its better moments is a continuing protection of those who have nullified the entire basis of representative society, of those who have turned the entire world around. If you think I am overly-emotional here as one readily-available measure examine crime statistics for 1963 compared with last year. Or drugs. Or anything else you consider relevant.

There was a time when I'd send you letters that required no answer. There was no need for you to be formal with me. Often I's conclude with the suggestion that you and your staff need not take the time for response. But there always was a note, no matter how brief. It was a kindness but I'd rather have had you save those few moments for the good work you have done or for your family. Then there cam no answers. There were promises not kept, like sending me the hearings of this committee. I wondered why. I don't know the answer. Perhapsmit is in your exhibit 42, p.511. I hope not. I hope you would not be part of an investigation of these truly rogue-elephant agencies and still take their word without question. What this represents may in fact be the cause of the phlebitis and its permanent, serious consequences.

Perfection is not a state of man. In my 63 years without doubt I have made mistakes. But I have tried to be honest and decent and to meet the obligations of citizenship. I know of nobody who can say to my face that I lied deliberately. I meant the dedication of my first book and I have tried to live it. If your parents had had to flee their homeland so their son might be born free you might understand this better.

The FBI's efforts to frame me go back to late 1939, although I doubt the attachment to that exhibit say this. Or that I proved it. Or at that early aged defeated their efforts and forced the indictment of a Congressional agent who was part of that effort to frame. Or that I also gave the FBI evidence of plans for a fascistic coup in this country. (I've asked for its return under FOIA only to have months of silence from this "new" FBI.) Or that I did the basic work that resulted in the end of the career of their then pal, Father Couglin. And a few others of the same character. Or that with the help of Thurman Arnold (who I'd helped earlier with my exposes of Nazi cartels), Abe Fortas, Paul Porter and Mrs. Ogden Reid I'd broken up a later Nazi-like frame. I think Mrs. Reid's Bert Andrews got a Pulitzer for it.

If you received the CIA's files on me - and I encouraged Schweiker to subpoena them and offered to waive all rights of privacy - I have some idea what you got if you got them all. I doubt your commitee did because if it had it would have exposed an as-yest unexposed CIA fron the illicit domestic activity. In time I will do this. I have the proofs. Enough proofs to take to court, as I will when I can. That time is now getting closer. (I am only one man, now somewhat handicapped.)

With these decades-long efforts to label me "Red" I'm sure that if the mail intercepts were given to your committee - and I did suggest to Schweiker that he subpoena them - I'd be surprised it my challenge to Khruschev to peaceful competition in agriculture was included. I did this with the encouragement of the USIA and State. State asked me to go to Russia to teach them how to raise better chickens. Or my condemnation of such Russian practices as stealing the work of writers.

While I'm rambling I'll go a little farther so you can have a better idea of how these institutions have worked and how, despite the minimal good your committee did, how far short it fell of what it owned the country.

In recent years my exercise has been restricted largely to walking. Where I live if I do not go uphill to begin with a real walk is impossible. The higher you go toward Gambrill on Shookstown road, the only way I can go, the more extremely of the right the residents become. For these people who find the modern world a cause of fear bad dogs are a manhood smybol. After I was set upon one by three large ones the local State Police barracks advised me to carry a pistol. I did and then, if not still without some apprehension, each morning I walked to the entrance to Gambrill. It was good for my health and with the intensity of my work it provided my only real thinking time. Then the gun law was passed. The State police which had told me to carry a gun denied me a permit. Under the law I am entitled to. I appealed and was never able to learn why I was turned down. Recently, however, I may have learned the answer. Someone in the federal agencies actually reported that I had actually threatened to shoot a Presidential helicopter down! These crazy cops actually spied on me, even when I was working in my own woods! I never said anything like that to nayone, never thought of it and if I had I didn't have the means. I had only a souvenin single-shot .22 pistol and an antique .38 automatic pistol. If this is not the spurious reason then poison from the FBI is. In any event, not being able to walk as I had may be the actual cause of this severe phlebitis. It simply isn't safe, especially when I was on anti-coagulent, to walk above Edgewood Church Road because above there is where the dogs have attacked me. Now I walk that far with a stout staff, one hell of a way to try to relax.

Going back to your subcommittee, after you invited me in Schweiker did. That day I was in agony. I spent the monring with him, than went to the doctor and learned of the phlebitis. I left Schweiker much and misleadingly encouraged. I had held a high opinion of him. That morning justified it. He led me to believe that he would be in touch with some regularity. So, when I was hospitalized I did what I could ill afford. I took a private room so he could speak to me in privacy. My condition and pain were quite visible. He'd told me that he'd come to see me or send transportation for me. Since then I have not seen him In the hospital I heard from all over Pennsylvania his reiteration of the same statements against which I'd cautioned him. The fact is that what the major media have just said about his report is precisely what I warned him last October they would. I then added that if he continued as he indicated he would lack the support of his colleagues in the Senate and would not have earned their support. He presented four theories to me and asked me to shoot them donw, his words. I did, told him all four come from my work, should be investigated, but not as a beginning - that the beginning required a solid factual basis as in court with a homicide. I offered him all of the original work in Post Mortem, which had gone to the print er the day before and told him he could use the original documents I'd give him without mention of me.

His subcommittee took "testimony" from authentic paranoids who are my friends. It did not take testimony from those I would have lost much from but would have welcomed. In time I hope to published what it continued to avoid.

And so it is that your committee's report, faithful to Orwell, is styled "Investigations of the Assassination of President John F. Kennedy..." and under "Scope" of its investigation on the first page specifies that it did not and did not intend to investigate that assassination.

How many pavings of how many raods to hell we can survive I don't know but I do regard this as still another one.

There is another disappointment I've had, not from you but from other Senators.

I have been trying without success to get the spooks' files on me since about 1969. Despite them I have some. I'm sure that what they are withholding - and I've not received a single page from the FBI - inlcudes what I'll be able to proove false. They are stonewalling me, in part because of their intrusions into my first-amendment rights, your 1965 belief I then did not credit. Of course there are some records that committee's properly hold secret. But unnecessary secrey has become the legislative way while the same legislature enacts good laws to reduce it in the executive agencies and then does nothing to facilitate enforcement. I have made requests to which there has been no response so that I may do in court what your committee refused to do as part of its job. Even my requests for a copy of Exhibit 42 with my name not masked has been refused me. I do not think this is either necessary or proper.

I wont take more time for proofs I have of mail and phone intrusions. I will tell you of one misuse and that your committee has not been consistent. I have copies of its records on other matters, records it not only did not publish but records that prove it, too, suppressed. Serious offense and proofs of the most dangerous capabilities that may not have come to your personal attention. This misuse was in court in the King case. The spooks fed the Tennessee Attorney General's office errors and unusual language about me. I have the CIA's papers on this. They were used in an effort to prevent a trial that could lead to a solution of the King assassination. I do not know whether the CIA itself provided these records of whether the Department of Justice did after getting them from the CIA. However, the usages are distinctive and mean identification of the CIA as source.

This is the way it works today, while the Senate is supposedly investigating.

This is why I am as disappointed as I seem.

This also is why, as long as I am able to, I will continue with profitless, unpopular efforts. I have promises to keep. I hope I still have miles to go before I sleep.

This requires no response. My purpose again is to inform you. I began intending only to prepare you to look out for your own interest.

Please excuse the errors. I now do not have time to correct them. I do want this to make today's mail so you can know and avoid what may in time hurt you. And, of course, now that the laboring moutain has birthed a babid mouse I have still more work to do.

Our best to you all,

Sincerely,

Harold Weisberg